

**Abstract 104**

**TITLE:** The Informed Consumer, The Road to a Healthier, Happier, and Safer Life

**AUTHORS:** Joseph L. Lennox-Smith (Executive Director, Positive Education, Inc.)

**ISSUE:** Too little emphasis is placed on secondary prevention and consumer education, while much time and effort is spent on prevention education on those not infected or even affected by HIV AIDS, and often do not feel that they are at risk. Primary prevention education is critical to prevent the spread of HIV, but not teaching prevention to those already infected could be a critical error. Secondary prevention education must go beyond Post-Test counseling and the meager follow-up efforts currently used. We need comprehensive education to address social, psychological, and economic issues, as well as prevention and adherence techniques.

**SETTING:** Classroom instruction at AIDS Service Organizations, Community Based Organizations, PWA Coalitions and other peer groups. For those reluctant to classroom training for various reasons, one-on-one peer can accomplish this or professional contact, reinforced with multi-lingual text, audiotapes and videotapes.

**PROJECT:** Positive Education, Inc. makes available a comprehensive 8-hour course to any individual, organization or group for a nominal donation, or provided free if the prospective user has no funding. It is always free to those infected or affected. Updates to the course are made as changes occur and sent to each registered associate. The name of the course is T.A.S.K. (The AIDS Survival Kit). Written on a 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, it is user friendly, and comes with Teachers Text, Student Text and Overhead Masters. T.A.S.K. is written from a PLWH's point of view and utilizes CDC guidelines for prevention training. The Teacher's Text is self explanatory, but train-the-trainer is available at a nominal charge. Although copyright exist, it is reproducible at no charge by any associate as long as there is no cost to consumers. T.A.S.K. is in the process of being translated into Spanish and as funding becomes available companion audio and videotapes will be produced, which will also be reproducible at no charge. At this conference we will present an overview of this program and demonstrate the value of a comprehensive consumer education package, whether they use T.A.S.K. or some other package. Positive Education hopes to fill in the gaps to rural areas that do not have programs already available. Currently we have 28 registered associates in 8 states.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** Through positively effecting self esteem, lessening denial, alleviating fears, instilling hope, promoting honesty in relationships and teaching prevention and adherence techniques, including an understanding of medications, there side effects, and how to deal with them, we have seen consumers come in with fear and leave eager to continue life. Providing an evaluation and epidemiology tools, we have received an overwhelmingly positive reaction to consumer training. On a scale of 1 to 5, the evaluations have averaged 4.5 overall with over 500 students taught.

**PRESENTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Name:** Joseph L. Lennox-Smith, Executive Director,

**Address:** Positive Education, Inc.

3008 Malijo Avenue,

Tampa, Florida 33629-7055

**Telephone:** (813) 831-4159

**Fax:** (813) 839-3190

**E-mail:** [Jlensmitty@aol.com](mailto:Jlensmitty@aol.com) or [task@pos-ed.org](mailto:task@pos-ed.org)